

Dukesgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105920
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	382310
Inspection dates	9 – 10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael McIlroy HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 – 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anna-Marie Shanley
Headteacher	Simon Bramwell
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2009
School address	Earlesdon Crescent Little Hulton Salford M38 9HF
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 14 lessons and eight teachers were seen. They also observed additional adults working with small groups of pupils, met with nominated staff and two groups of pupils. Telephone conversations were held with the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and with a representative of the local authority. An inspector also briefly talked to ten parents on the second morning of the inspection. Inspectors looked at the school's work, its self-evaluation, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, a range of policies and assessment and tracking data.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What the quality of teaching was.
- Whether the curriculum was meeting the needs of pupils.
- Whether the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities was at least satisfactory.
- How well subject leadership was developed.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than three times the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average as is the number of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal times of the school year. The school holds a number of awards including the Eco-award and the Green Flag award.

When the school was inspected in December 2009, it was judged to require special measures. Since then, the school has been inspected on four occasions and at its last monitoring visit was judged to be making satisfactory progress. The school was required to make significant improvements in the quality of teaching, to improve the curriculum and to accelerate the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Following the second monitoring visit, the governing body was replaced with an Interim Executive Board. The school has experienced some discontinuity in leadership since being placed in special measures. Since April 2011, it has been led by an executive headteacher and a head of school who have been contracted to lead the school until August 2012.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school now provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils.

Following the appointment of the joint leadership team of the executive headteacher and the head of school, the school's progress in addressing the areas it was asked to improve accelerated quickly. Under their very good and determined leadership, a clear path for the school's improvement, based on a detailed analysis of pupils' needs, was swiftly established and enacted with the support and hard work of staff. School leaders focused heavily on improving the quality of teaching which is now good. Targeted training, the robust tackling of weaknesses in teaching and carefully considered new appointments have contributed to this. The use of assessment by teachers is satisfactory. Much marking is good but not all pupils understand the National Curriculum levels they are working at. The curriculum has also been transformed and now meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. It was refocused quickly on to the core subjects of English and mathematics so that prior underachievement in these subjects could be tackled. These changes have improved pupils' achievement which is now broadly satisfactory and speeded up the progress that pupils make. Results for national tests in 2011 for Year 6 pupils were the best for five years and exceeded the floor targets set by the government for primary schools. However, few pupils attained the higher levels in English and mathematics due to weaknesses in higher-level mathematical skills and in writing, such as punctuation, spelling and grammar. There are also not enough opportunities for pupils to write in different genres, to engage in independent research and to apply their basic skills to different aspects of mathematics such as problem-solving. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, now make satisfactory progress because of the much improved, better-led and better-targeted provision the school provides. A further factor behind the improved attainment and progress of pupils is the good care, guidance and support which the school provides which ensure that pupils, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, are ready for learning.

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe there. Behaviour is satisfactory as is pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They make an adequate and growing contribution to the school and its wider community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is also satisfactory. Average, and rising attendance and average attainment mean that pupils are now adequately prepared for the next stage of their education. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Its

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outdoor area lacks up-to-date resources and is not used to its full potential to provide learning opportunities for children. Additional adults are not always effectively deployed so that children's independence and learning can be better developed and available resources are not always used imaginatively.

Leadership, including governance, is good overall. The executive headteacher and the head of school are well-supported by the senior leadership team but some staff, such as foundation subject leaders, are very new to their roles. A strong feature of the school is that it now engages well with its parents by providing good opportunities for their views to be heard, by acting quickly on their key requests and by providing opportunities for them to help their children learn.

The school's good leadership, its accurate self-evaluation, the rapid improvement in teaching, improved results for pupils at Key Stage 2 and rising attendance show that the school has a good capacity to improve further. Consequently, the school now provides satisfactory value for money.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - providing pupils, including the more-able, with greater opportunities to write independently and in a wider range of different genres and to conduct independent research
 - strengthening pupils' writing skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation
 - ensuring that basic number skills are well-embedded and that pupils of all abilities have opportunities to study aspects of mathematics beyond number work, such as problem-solving.
 - ensuring that pupils are more aware of the National Curriculum levels they are working at and towards so that they know where they must improve.
- Develop provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - refurbishing the outdoor area and ensuring that it is available for continuous use by children during learning sessions
 - developing the skills of additional adults and deploying them more effectively
 - strengthening learning by making more imaginative use of resources.
- Develop the roles and skills of the leaders of foundation subjects.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils make satisfactory progress and the rate of learning is accelerating. They generally listen well to adults and each other and work well together. In a lesson on business and enterprise, pupils collaborated enthusiastically in large groups to discuss and list the key elements of a successful firm. Pupils take pride in their work and their written work is mostly well-presented. Increasingly, they are using a range of learning aids independently to help them improve their writing. In one class, pupils used lists of synonyms well to help them find more interesting words to include in a letter of complaint. Pupils are engaged by, and respond well to work that challenges them. A good example of this took place in a Year 5 lesson where pupils enthusiastically researched how to design a car for the future.

The improved rate of learning has had an impact on pupils' attainment. In 2011, results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics and English improved and were broadly average. School targets for pupils gaining the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics were exceeded. Pupils attained higher levels in mathematics. The lower results in English were largely due to weaknesses in pupils' writing such as spelling, grammar and punctuation. Very few pupils achieved the higher grades in both subjects. Results at Key Stage 1 in 2011 were below average, having dipped in the previous year. Pupils performed best in reading and worst in writing. This dip was due to some weaknesses in the cohort but also to a legacy of weak basic skills caused by earlier discontinuity in staffing and weaknesses in teaching. Inspectors found that the attainment of pupils currently in Key Stage 1 is much closer to what is expected for these year groups, which reflects greater stability in staffing and better teaching. While almost all groups of pupils made satisfactory progress in their learning in 2011, girls made faster progress than boys. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals made slightly better progress than that of their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities now make satisfactory progress overall and some are making faster progress. Effective leadership of this area of the school's work, sharp identification of these pupils' needs and careful tracking of their progress have brought this about. Good support by trained adults and better teaching have also contributed to this improvement.

Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns they have can be raised with adults and will be addressed. Behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well, but in a few lessons there is some inattention and some occasional boisterousness when pupils move between activities. Pupils understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and there is a satisfactory range of sporting activities they can take part in. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and the community. They have opportunities to exercise responsibility, such as membership of the school council and selling poppies for Remembrance Day, and some have performed at local ukulele and dance festivals. Attendance is average. It is rising, due to the school's focus on tackling absence, better communication with parents

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and a more interesting academic diet. Coupled with average attainment at Key Stage 2, this means that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the future world of study and work. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a satisfactory knowledge of other cultures and religions.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is now good and some is outstanding. Effective teaching was characterised by detailed planning, good pace, clear explanations and sharp questioning that engaged and held pupils’ attention. In an outstanding and fast-paced Year 6 literacy lesson on punctuation, the teacher used questioning well to revise prior knowledge, check understanding, keep pupils alert and to assist them to articulate their thinking. Good use is made of resources and information and communication technology (ICT) by teachers. In a good lesson in the Early Years Foundation Stage, a colourful, interactive whiteboard program was used well to help children see and understand the key sounds they were learning. Planning is of good quality and ensures that work is well-matched to most pupils’ differing abilities. Teaching assistants are deployed well, particularly in supporting less-able pupils. Behaviour in class is managed well. In a good lesson in Year 3, inattention was quickly dealt with so that the flow of the teacher’s explanation was not interrupted. Where teaching was satisfactory, activities were not always well-organised and did not always match pupils’ learning needs, including those of more-able pupils. A scrutiny of pupils’ books showed that much of pupils’ written work still suffers from a legacy of prior underachievement in areas such as grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils’ mathematical skills are improving

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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but many still have a weak understanding of basic mathematical concepts. Mathematical work undertaken is heavily focused on number calculations and does not always provide more-able pupils with challenging opportunities to apply their skills, for example in problem-solving activities, or to work independently. Teachers’ use of assessment is satisfactory. Data are used well by staff to track pupils’ progress and identify underachievement. Marking in the core subjects of English and mathematics is good. However, it is less well-developed in other subjects and not all pupils are clear about the National Curriculum levels they are working at or aiming towards.

The satisfactory curriculum includes a range of carefully considered intervention strategies. The lengthening of the school day has enabled the school to include extra lessons on writing and mathematics. A cross-curricular approach to the teaching of humanities has been introduced and has successfully engaged pupils’ interest. It provides opportunities for pupils to discuss and collaborate and to extend their understanding of the world of work, as was seen in a good lesson on business and enterprise in a Year 4 class. Pupils are cared for, guided and supported well. New pupils are inducted well into school life and pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are supported well and their progress carefully tracked by the effective work of the learning mentor and other staff.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The executive headteacher and head of school quickly introduced effective systems that pinpointed pupils’ underachievement and identified shortcomings in teaching. Staff are now more accountable for their work and weaknesses in teaching have been swiftly addressed. Well-planned training, including the use of the expertise of another school, continues to improve the quality of teaching and of the curriculum. Carefully considered recent appointments have further strengthened teaching and the leadership team. However, some staff are just developing their new roles as subject leaders for the foundation subjects and their impact so far has been limited. School leaders are supported, but also challenged well, by the effective Interim Executive Board. The school now engages well with parents and carers, identifying their concerns through questionnaires and a parents’ forum. Leaders react positively and quickly to these, for example by introducing more reading resources, a sports day and a Christmas Fair. Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are detailed and reviewed regularly and staff are updated frequently on relevant guidance. The school

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promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. Discrimination is tackled well but the needs of more-able pupils are not yet being fully met. Pupils generally get on well with each other and with adults and the school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. There are satisfactory and improving partnerships with other schools, including local secondary schools.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are often well below what is expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in their learning, but by the time they join Year 1 many have not reached the levels expected of children of this age due to weaknesses in their reading, writing, and creative development. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some is good. Learning resources are used satisfactorily but there is scope for some to be used more imaginatively in teaching. Children understand how the learning environment is organised and have satisfactory opportunities to work in adult-led as well as in child-initiated activities. However, the outdoor area is accessible to children only at set times of the day, rather than for the full learning day and some outdoor resources are in need of refurbishment. Additional adults are not always used effectively to reduce the size of teaching groups and to encourage children’s independence. Leadership is satisfactory. The recently appointed Early Years manager has made a good start in introducing new systems for assessment and children’s ongoing progress is recorded and stored in individual learning journals. Other systems record pupils’ attainment on entry but these have only recently been introduced. Welfare requirements, including those relating to the safeguarding of children, are in place. Induction procedures are effective and parents are able to contribute to children’s learning journals.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parent and carer questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so. An inspector looked at the school's own questionnaires to parents which indicated good support for the school's work and spoke briefly with ten parents on the second day of the inspection. Most were strongly supportive of the school's work.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and is consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

Sixth-form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dukesgate Primary School, Salford, M38 9HF

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we inspected your school recently. Your school is no longer in special measures and is now a satisfactory school. Some of the best things we found were that:

- your school is led and managed well
- you are taught well by your teachers
- you feel safe in school and know who to turn to if you have any worries
- the care, guidance and support your school provides is good
- your school works well with parents and carers
- your curriculum has been improved and is now satisfactory.

We have asked the executive headteacher, staff and the members of the Interim Executive Board to make some changes to make your school even better. We have asked them to help you all learn more in English and mathematics by providing you, including those of you who can do harder work, with more opportunities to write independently and in different styles. We have also asked them to strengthen your key skills in mathematics and in writing, especially spelling, grammar and punctuation. We have suggested that changes are made in the Reception and Nursery classes so that the resources in the outdoor area are improved and that this area is used more during the school day. We have also suggested that changes are made to how staff work in this part of the school. Finally, we have asked that teachers who have been given extra jobs receive training so that they can carry out these extra responsibilities well.

Once again, many thanks for being so helpful and polite when we visited your school.

Yours sincerely,

Michael McIlroy
Her Majesty's Inspector

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